

Message Text

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RSC-01 COME-00 TRSE-00 SWF-01 OES-03 CIAE-00 INR-05

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18071

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UN, FAO, WFC

SUBJ: UNGA CONSIDERATION OF WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE (WFC)

DEPARTMENT PASS AGRICULTURE

REF: STATE 261234

1. SUMMARY: DCM AND AG ATTACHE CALLED ON SOVIET OFFICIALS OF THE MFA AND AGRICULTURE MINISTRY TO EXPRESS STRONG U.S. INTEREST IN UNGA ENDORSEMENT OF THE WFC RESULTS (REFTEL). AN IDENTICAL NON-PAPER EXTRACTED FROM THE TALKING POINTS IN PARAGRAPH 5 WAS LEFT WITH THE SOVIETS. THEY AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO SUPPORT A UNGA ENDORSEMENT, BUT SAID THAT THEY WOULD NEED TO SEE THE TEXT OF THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION. MEANWHILE AN IZVESTIYA COMMENTARY PROJECTED AN UNHELPFUL VIEW OF WORLD FOOD PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

2. AG ATTACHE CALLED ON DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE BORIS RUNOV (WHO WAS A MEMBER OF SOVIET DELEGATION TO ROME) ON NOVEMBER 28 TO DISCUSS REFTTEL, UNDERLINING U.S. INTEREST
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IN HAVING THE CURRENT SESSION OF THE UNGA ADOPT A RESOLUTION

ENDORISING THE RESULTS OF THE WFC. RUNOV EXPRESSED AS HIS PERSONAL OPINION THE VIEW THAT MANY OF THE WFC RESULTS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT AND AGREED TO LEND HIS SUPPORT TO A GENERAL ENDORSEMENT IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH MFA. HE SAID THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD HAVE TO SEE THE WORDING OF THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION BEFORE DECIDING DEFINITELY TO SUPPORT IT.

3. DCM CALLED ON ALEKSEY NESTORENKO, CHIEF OF THE MFA'S INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION ON NOVEMBER 29 TO STRESS OUR POINTS FURTHER (NESTORENKO WAS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION IN ROME). NESTORENKO SAID THAT THE SOVIETS SHARE OUR SUPPORT OF THE RESULTS OF THE WFC AS A WHOLE AND WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO A SIMPLE STATEMENT OF ENDORSEMENT, PREFERABLY A CONSENSUS STATEMENT, IN THE UNGA. MOSCOW WILL NEED TO SEE THE EXACT WORDING, HE REPEATED, BUT SO FAR HAS NOT RECEIVED ANY WORD ON A PROPOSED DRAFT. THE WORDING, HE SAID, IS BASICALLY A TECHNICAL QUESTION. THE SOVIETS HE EMPHASIZED WILL NOT AGREE TO THE INTRODUCTION OF ANY NEW POINTS IN THE UN CONSIDERATION, BUT "WE ARE PREPARED TO COOPERATE WITH YOUR DELEGATION."

4. EVALUATING THE WFC AS A WHOLE, NESTORENKO SAID THAT THE SOVIETS CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT AND ARE PLEASED THAT IT ENDED WELL. SOME OF ITS RESOLUTIONS DEAL WITH DELICATE QUESTIONS AND THESE MUST BE APPROACHED CAUTIOUSLY. HASTE CAN BE DAMAGING; MOSCOW APPROVES OF A SLOW AND STEADY APPROACH. ONE SHOULD NOT EXPECT QUICK OR DRAMATIC RESULTS.

5. AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE DELICATE QUESTIONS, NESTORENKO CITED THE RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A NEW SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND STORAGE. THE SOVIETS APPROVE OF THIS CONCEPT. BUT THE TYPE OF MECHANISM NEEDED IS FOGGY AND MUCH TIME WILL BE REQUIRED TO WORK IT OUT. ANY NEW SYSTEM SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT EACH COUNTRY'S OWN SYSTEM OF AGRICULTURE. SOME POOR COUNTRIES STILL HAVE "FEUDAL" SOCIAL STRUCTURES, SAID NESTORENKO, AND NEED MAJOR REFORM AND CHANGE. BUT THEY WILL NOT ACCEPT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE IN SENSITIVE DOMESTIC SPHERES. LIKEWISE THE NEW MECHANISM MUST AVOID BECOMING A NEW INTERNATIONAL BUREAUCRACY. IT NEED NOT BE BIG TO BE EFFECTIVE. IT SHOULD

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NOT DUPLICATE THE WORK OF THE FAO BUT IT SHOULD DRAW UPON THE FINDINGS AND EXPERTISE OF THAT BODY.

6. ANOTHER GENERAL FOOD PROBLEM CITED BY NESTORENKO WAS THE DIFFICULTY IN PREDICTING AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT. NATIONAL PERFORMANCE CANNOT BE GUARANTEED FROM YEAR TO YEAR BECAUSE OF UNUSUAL WEATHER. TODAY'S SURPLUS AREA COULD HAVE TOMORROW'S DEFICIT, AND VICE VERSA. A MAJOR PRIORITY NOW SHOULD BE FOR ALL AREAS

TO GROW AS MUCH FOOD AS POSSIBLE. SOME DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MUST UNDERTAKE MAJOR REFORMS, HE REITERATED, IN ORDER TO DEVELOP MORE RAPIDLY. PARTS OF AFRICA (HE CITED GABON) COULD GROW MORE FOOD BUT THEY HAVE NO AVAILABLE MARKET. IN INDIA THE "FEUDAL" SOCIAL SYSTEM HAMPERS FULL PRODUCTION. EVEN IN THE U.S., HE SAID, CERTAIN PRIORITIES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO ENSURE THAT BASIC FOOD NEEDS ARE MET FIRST.

7. NESTORENKO SAID THAT THE SOVIET DELEGATION IN ROME HAD WORKED WELL WITH THE U.S. DELEGATION. THE CONFERENCE, HE SAID, COULD HAVE BEEN MORE USEFUL, BUT THE TIME WAS TOO SHORT. THE COMPROMISES WORKED OUT WERE NOT BAD, BUT LIKE ALL COMPROMISES THEY DILUTED SOME POINTS. NOW WE MUST WAIT, HE SAID, TO SEE HOW THE DECISIONS OF THE WFC ARE CARRIED OUT.

8. ON A CONTRASTING NOTE, IZVESTIYA (NOVEMBER 29) CARRIED A COMMENTARY ON THE WFC BY A. KLIMOV IN WHICH HE FOCUSSED ON "COLONIALISM" AS THE CAUSE FOR THE DEVELOPING WORLD'S FOOD PROBLEMS. HE ALSO GOT IN SOME SWIPES AT MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND MILITARY BUDGETS. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES BY SAYING THAT UNGA DISCUSSION OF THE WFC RESULTS IS EXPECTED AND -- IN A MIASMA OF GENERALITIES -- THAT THE ROME CONFERENCE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE POST-COLONIAL PEOPLES CAN BE SOLVED THROUGH BROAD MUTUALLY-BENEFICIAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION OF ALL STATES. KLIMOV'S ARTICLE SUGGESTS A MUCH LESS HELPFUL SOVIET ATTITUDE ON WORLD FOOD PROBLEMS THAN RUNOV OR NESTORENKO CONVEYED, ALTHOUGH IT DOES NOT IMPLY SOVIET OPPOSITION AT THE UN.
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